

Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 CIEP-01 FAA-00 MCT-01

SY-05 FBIE-00 /073 W

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R 261800Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3598

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 2135

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SOPN GY

SUBJ: CUBANA INCIDENT CONTINUES TO OCCUPY FRONT-PAGE

REF: GEORGETOWN 2094

SUMMARY: THE GOG-OWNED PRESS CONTINUES TO GIVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO EVENTS STEMMING FROM THE RECENT CUBANA CRASH. CARIBBEAN DISUNITY IS BEGINNING TO REPLACE POSSIBLE U.S. INVOLVEMENT AS THE CENTER OF ATTENTION, BUT PROBABLY ONLY TEMPORARILY. END SUMMARY.

1. THE GOG-OWNED DAILY "CHRONICLE" CONTINUES TO GIVE FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE TO THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING THE RECENT CRASH OF THE CUBANA AIRLINER.

2. THE "SUNDAY CHRONICLE" OF OCTOBER 24 HIGHLIGHTS AN ARTICLE BY "SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT" WHICH PRESENTS EVIDENCE AGAINST THE TWO SUSPECTS HELD IN TRINIDAD AS "OVERWHELMING." THE REPORT GIVES SPECIAL ATTENTION TO POSSIBLE U.S. LINKS TO THE INCIDENT THROUGH OUR LEGAL ATTACHE IN
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CARACAS, THE ACTIVITIES OF BARBADIAN BOXING

PROMOTER SEALEY WHOSE PASSPORT CONTAINED U.S. VISAS AND ENTRY STAMPS (NO MENTION IS MADE OF HIS ACQUAINTANCE WITH OUR AMBASSADOR), AND THE SUPPOSED HISTORY OF USG INVOLVEMENT WITH CUBAN EXILES WHO MAINTAIN HEADQUARTERS IN MIAMI.

3. IT GOES ON TO CLAIM THAT THE UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION, THE COMMANDOS OF THE UNITED REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION (CORU) WAS FORMED AFTER A MEETING OF FIVE ANTI-CASTRO EXILE GROUPS (INCLUDING EL CONDOR, BRIGADE 2506, AND MOVEMENT OF APRIL 17) HELD IN COSTA RICA LAST MARCH. AMONG THE DECISIONS SUPPOSEDLY MADE AT THAT MEETING WERE THAT "AMERICAN PROPERTY AND PERSONS SHOULD NOT BE ATTACKED; ATTACKS SHOULD BE STEPPED-UP AGAINST PERSONS, INSTITUTIONS AND COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE ANY KIND OF CONTACT WITH CUBA; AND, EACH ORGANIZATION SHOULD CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR EACH ACT OF TERRORISM IT PERFORMS THROUGH ITS AGENTS AND BRANCHES IN MIAMI, FLORIDA, USA."

4. THE FEATURE EDITORIAL BY CARL BLACKMAN IN THE SAME EDITION ADDRESSES THE SAME TOPIC BUT WITH A DIFFERENT EMPHASIS. BLACKMAN FOCUSES ON THE STRAIN WHICH THE DELAY IN RESOLVING THE CUBANA INCIDENT IS PLACING ON CARIBBEAN UNITY (WHICH HE DESCRIBES AS BEING "AS DECEPTIVE AS COW DUNG"), AND CLAIMS THAT ONLY BARBADOS CAN TRY THE SUSPECTS. HE CHARGES CERTAIN CARIBBEAN LEADERS WITH GIVING IN TO BLACKMAIL IN FAILING TO ACT MORE SWIFTLY ON THE MATTER, BUT ADDS THAT "LIKE WATERGATE, ONE DAY THE TRUTH WILL COME OUT TO SHOCK THE WORLD."

5. MORE RECENT EDITIONS OF THE "CHRONICLE" INCLUDE MOSTLY WIRE SERVICE REPORTS ON OTHER ASPECTS OF THE CRASH SUCH AS THE FIVE-NATION CONFERENCE IN TRINIDAD, THE POSITION OF BARBADOS, AND THE RECENT WARNING FROM EL CONDOR.

6. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THE ANTI-U.S. ARTICLE BY
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"SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT" TO HAVE BEEN CONTRIBUTED BY OUR CUBAN FRIENDS FROM PRENSA LATINA AND THE LOCAL CUBAN EMBASSY. REPORTING BY THE WIRE SERVICES WHICH HAS RECEIVED ATTENTION HERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLY LESS PREJUDICED. WHILE POSSIBLE U.S. LINKS TO THE AIR CRASH WILL REMAIN OF GREAT LOCAL CONCERN, THEY ARE BEING PUSHED MORE INTO THE BACKGROUND, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, BY THE LACK OF SOLID EVIDENCE AND

ESPECIALLY BY THE INCREASING INTRA-CARIBBEAN
SQUABBLING WHICH HAS SURFACED OVER WHO WILL ASSUME
JURISDICTION IN THE MATTER.
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